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INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3449
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 5736
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3313
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3979
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3957
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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, SCA/PPD, IIP, ECA

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SCUL](#) [KPAO](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: STATE MEDIA HIGHLIGHT TURKMEN PRESIDENT'S
TRIP TO U.S. TO ATTEND UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

¶2. (U) SUMMARY: President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov recent visit to the U.S. to attend the UNGA dominated all media outlets for a full week. Coverage was positive and extensive for each meeting and event, including special note of the meeting with Secretary Clinton and his visit to New Jersey. More than three quarters of the stories in the papers on September 24 focused on the United States. END SUMMARY.

STATE TV PRAISES ALL OF BERDI'S U.S. MEETINGS

¶3. (U) From September 21 to 29, all state TV news reports started with detailed praise of President Berdimuhamedov's trip to the United States. On September 23, "Watan" TV (Turkmen) reported on Berdimuhamedov's speech at the General Assembly, and aired the speech in its entirety on September 28. "Watan" also covered a meeting with former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, where the latter emphasized Turkmenistan's big role in Central Asia and hailed its approach to multiple pipeline export routes. Multiple stories appeared about successful meetings with U.S. business leaders. On September 25, the "Watan" TV evening news program (Turkmen) reported on the visit to the state of New Jersey, where the International Information Academy awarded Berdimuhamedov with a "high order." The story praised this event as universal recognition of Berdimuhamedov's contributions to international relations, and also reported on the meeting with the mayor of Trenton, New Jersey and the declaration of September 24 as the Day of the President of Turkmenistan in New Jersey. Overall, state TV news stories described Berdimuhamedov's meetings and his speech at UNGA as a vivid illustration of his profound international influence and impact.

¶4. (U) Throughout September 21-29, the "Turkmenistan" TV channel's (Russian, Turkmen, English, Chinese, Arabic, Persian, French) hourly news program also constantly reported on the visit as the main story, referring to the "Watan" TV news stories. All state TV channels have been airing frequent programs highlighting the meetings organized by different state agencies, organizations, schools, and etc., aimed at discussing and praising President Berdimuhamedov's productive visit to the U.S.

15. (U) On September 24, nearly 75 percent of the stories on state-run dailies "Neytralniy Turkmenistan" (Russian, circ. 49,091) and "Turkmenistan" (Turkmen, circ. 38,091) (9 articles in each daily) were dedicated to the United States. The front pages had President Obama's message congratulating Berdimuhamedov on the Ramadan holiday. The second and third pages had stories on his meetings with U.S. businesses including John Deer, Case, and Exxon Mobil, as well as meetings with former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the Eurasia Group. The back page of the paper featured a meeting with Chevron. The same day, state weeklies "Turkmen dunyasi" (Turkmen, circ. 35,591), "Ashgabat" (Turkmen, circ. 25,091), "Watan" (Turkmen, circ. 32,091) posted front page articles on President Berdimuhamedov's meeting with the Secretary, highlighting it with their picture. In subsequent days, the state weeklies reprinted from the state-daily stories on Berdimuhamedov's meeting with Secretary Clinton, other high ranking officials, and U.S. companies.

16. (U) On September 26, state-run dailies "Neytralniy Turkmenistan" (Russian, circ. 49,091) and "Turkmenistan" (Turkmen, circ. 38,091) carried front page stories on the September 24 visit of the Turkmen President to New Jersey, the proclamation of a Turkmenistan President's Day, the award from the International Information Academy. The articles emphasized the significant progress made by Berdimuhamedov during his visits and meetings and underscored the improving Turkmen-U.S. relationship. On September 28, the same state-run dailies had a photo gallery of Berdimuhamedov's meetings with U.S. officials in chronological order, occupying almost the entire second pages. In subsequent days, state weeklies reprinted

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from state dailies the stories on Berdimuhamedov's visit to New Jersey.

GOVERNMENT AND PRO-GOVERNMENT WEBSITES ALSO HIGHLIGHT THE TURKMEN PRESIDENT'S U.S. VISIT

17. (U) From September 21 to 25, the government-run website "Turkmenistan Golden Age" (www.turkmenistan.gov.tm) (Turkmen, Russian and English) repeated the Turkmen State News Service (TDH) stories. Russia based pro-government website "Turkmenistan.Ru" (Russian, English) also posted articles on Berdimuhamedov's U.S. visit and meetings September 23-26.

18. (SBU) COMMENT: The hagiography of Berdimuhamedov continues in the State media. During the trip he was portrayed as the center of all major meetings and events at the UN. The State media hailed the trip as "an historical step towards a strong relationship between Turkmenistan and U.S." Some outlets used the massive coverage of the President's trip as a chance to run unrelated stories on U.S. programs in Turkmenistan - one an interview by Fulbright scholar, Melda Yildiz and another a lengthy article on FLEX (Future Leaders Exchange Program) including interviews with alumni. END COMMENT.

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